

9/20/01

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Hanover, MA 02339
[REDACTED]

Dear Mr. Delahunt,

I am writing to oppose military retaliation for the recent attacks in New York and Washington, DC. I lived not much more than a mile from the Pentagon at one time, so I am quite well aware of how frightening and outrageous this whole situation is. But, as I said in my last letter, military retribution is not going to solve anything. If we do not solve the real problems here, then we will be doing the American people a grave disservice. Not only that, we will be leaving ourselves open to a very long and weary future of violence and despair. Neither the United States nor the world deserves such a fate. It has been my good fortune to meet quite a few good people from this new "Middle East" we have created for ourselves, which apparently now stretches most of the way across the eastern hemisphere from the Atlantic to the Pacific. They don't deserve any punishment over this. As you know, almost no one in this area even has a chance to have a say in the conduct of the government, let alone the conduct of terrorist groups. It is as unjust to bomb other countries for harboring terrorists as it would be to bomb the US for harboring terrorists. It is not fair, and I have always been led to believe that America has some interest in fairness.

At the same time, it has been my ill-fortune to find out a lot more about American conduct in the new Middle East. For example, a while back I heard a talk given by a man who had gone to visit Iraq. One of the stories he told involved school children who had not even been born at the time of the Gulf War. However, these children had grown up, from the time of their very births, to have a mortal fear of the sound of airplanes passing overhead. Virtually every plane they had ever heard in their lives had dropped bombs on them. The man said he had observed this fear himself.

I never really understood what that must be like until September 11. We had one day of such terror here in the US. But we have inflicted such terror on innocent children in another country for 10 long years. If this was our only fault, it would be great enough. But it is not, as I am sure you well know. I ask you as a good man, and as an American, to do the right thing. Where we have gone wrong, let us go right. The jeers of today will pale in comparison to the cheers of future generations. There is never a good time to be stubborn and pig-headed, but that is what we as a nation are proposing to be if we go out there and starting blowing people up. War is not going to solve our problems, it is just going to get more people killed and exacerbate the situation. Solve our problems, don't compound them. Thank you.

Yours,

[REDACTED]